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14. ABSTRACT Since the overthrow of the Batista regime by Fidel Castro nearly fifty years ago, Cubans have been subjected to the authoritarian rule of a Communist dictator. As Fidel and his brother Raul age, the days of Castro rule are drawing to an end. This end will mark a new beginning for the people of Cuba. Although the Communist Party has a cadre of loyal supporters throughout the country, the passing of the Castro brothers will provide the United States an opportunity to aid in the democratization of Cuba. An effective way for this to happen is proper coordination of joint, combined, and interagency efforts. The U.S. military, especially the United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), will play a crucial supporting role to the Department of State. The key to success in this supporting role is a well defined Cuba Theater of Operations (CTO) command construct with a robust Combined Joint Interagency Coordination Group (CJIACG). The desire of the Cuban people, combined with the support of the U. S. government, military, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) will allow for a peaceful transition to Cuban democracy.					
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**A NEW FIDELITY: THE SUPPORTING ROLE OF
USSOUTHCOM IN A POST-CASTRO CUBA**

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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23 May 2008

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Abstract

Since the overthrow of the Bastista regime by Fidel Castro nearly fifty years ago, Cubans have been subjected to the authoritarian rule of a Communist dictator. As Fidel and his brother Raul age, the days of Castro rule are drawing to an end. This end will mark a new beginning for the people of Cuba. Although the Communist Party has a cadre of loyal supporters throughout the country, the passing of the Castro brothers will provide the United States an opportunity to aid in the democratization of Cuba. An effective way for this to happen is proper coordination of joint, combined, and interagency efforts. The U.S. military, especially the United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), will play a crucial supporting role to the Department of State. The key to success in this supporting role is a well defined Cuba Theater of Operations (CTO) command construct with a robust Combined Joint Interagency Coordination Group (CJIACG). The desire of the Cuban people, combined with the support of the U.S. government, military, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), will allow for a peaceful transition to Cuban democracy.

INTRODUCTION

Cuba is an island nation in the heart of the Caribbean paradise. It is also home to one of the few remaining Communist governments existing in the world today. Since the overthrow of the Batista regime nearly fifty years ago, Fidel Castro, his brother Raul, and members of the Cuban Communist Party have ruled with an iron fist. Fidel and Raul Castro will soon pass on and a new leadership will rise to power in Cuba. The United States can help the Cuban people seize the opportunity to open the door to democracy during the transition of a post-Castro Cuba. The assistance and commitment offered to Cubans will be unlike any they have known in recent memory. However, this “fidelity” must have a civilian face which will require effective interagency planning, coordination, and execution. The U.S. military will play a vital role. U.S. forces and governmental agencies will be required to coordinate efforts to prevent humanitarian, terrorist, migrant, drug trafficking, and insurgent crises during a post-Castro transition. This paper demonstrates that the United States Southern Command should play a *supporting* role to the Department of State in a post-Castro Cuba transition. The key to success in this supporting role is the creation of a Cuba Theater of Operations (CTO) command construct with a robust Combined Joint Interagency Coordination Group (CJIACG).

According to the *National Security Strategy*, efforts must be made to, “Expand the circle of development by opening societies and building the infrastructure of democracy.”¹ The fall of the Castro regime will be an excellent opportunity for the United States to peacefully influence democratization within Cuba. Although an assumption can be made that a non-violent transition in Cuba will occur, internal conflict within Cuba can potentially

¹U.S. President, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington, DC: White House, 2006). <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/2006/sectionI.html> (accessed 04 April 2008).

manifest itself via other avenues and impact the security and stability of the United States and the Caribbean. A realistic scenario of a post-Castro Cuba will be critically analyzed to determine potential threats and security concerns that must be considered by the USSOUTHCOM commander. Proposed options that can be exercised in a supporting role via an innovative Cuba Theater of Operations Construct (CTO) construct will then be recommended to the USSOUTHCOM commander.

CUBA TODAY

Since Fidel Castro seized power in Cuba in the late 1950's, Cubans have been subject to human rights abuses including inhumane treatment of prisoners, harassment of intellectuals and professionals, inhibiting a citizen's right to privacy, and the restriction of free speech, religion, and the press.² Despite their mistreatment, Cubans are well educated and enjoy one of the highest literacy rates (99.8%) in the world.³ Cuba has a strong foundation full of professionals and well-educated citizens, and though some are content with the status quo, others demand a greater voice in government affairs. In fact, "No one is more anxious to abandon egalitarian collectivism than the legion of engineers, doctors, technicians, and teachers forced to live without the slightest hope of betterment."⁴ Although the passage of the Helms-Burton Act in 1996 "codified" the U.S. embargo on Cuba, sales of agricultural commodities from the United States are legal.⁵ Some pro-Castro regime supporters would argue that the embargo has done little to hurt Cuba, as other nations including democracies

² U.S. Department of State, *U.S. Cuba Policy* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, July 30, 2003). <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rls/fs/22905.htm> (accessed 22 February 2008).

³ Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook – Cuba*, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/print/cu.html> (accessed 29 March 2008).

⁴ Carlos Alberto Montaner and Ignacio Ramonet, (quote is that of Carlos Montaner) "Was Fidel Good for Cuba?" *Foreign Policy* 158 (January-February 2007), 56-65, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1194870131&sid=4&Fmt=3&clientId=18762&RQT=309&VName=PQD> (accessed 14 March 2008).

⁵ U.S. Department of State, *U.S. Cuba Policy* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, July 30, 2003). <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rls/fs/22905.htm> (accessed 22 February 2008).

such as Canada and members of the European Union, have not placed such restrictions on the country.⁶ In fact, tourism is one of the main industries driving the Cuban economy as Cuba is a popular destination for Canadian and European visitors.⁷

Like a tropical breeze, the winds of change are beginning to blow lightly in Cuba. The citizens are just now gaining access to modern amenities such as cell phone service.⁸ This modest change is merely one indication of the repressed society from which the Cuban people are slowly emerging. In fact, “Private citizens are prohibited from buying computers or accessing the internet without special authorization.”⁹ Conversely, many Cubans are content with the status quo. “In Fidel Castro’s Cuba, there have been no major uprisings. When Castro eventually succumbs to his illnesses, there is nothing to suggest that Cubans will suddenly rise up against socialism.”¹⁰ Others believe that the U.S. policy towards Cuba is a failure and that the United States is completely unprepared to handle the challenges of a post-Castro Cuba:

“Washington must finally wake up to the reality of how and why the Castro regime has proved so durable—and recognize that, as a result of its willful ignorance, it has few tools with which to effectively influence Cuba after Fidel is gone.”¹¹

The aforementioned counterargument is debatable, especially if one explores the current and future problems facing Cuba. Washington does, in fact, have the tools necessary

⁶Julia E. Sweig, “Fidel’s Final Victory,” *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 86, Iss. 1 (January-February 2007), 39, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1214614271> (accessed 28 February 2008).

⁷Prensa Latina, “Cuba Tourism Boom,” Travel Wire News (01 March 2006), <http://www.travelwirenews.com/cgi-script/csArticles/articles/000077/007756.htm> (accessed 19 April 2008).

⁸CNN.com, “Ordinary Cubans Gain Access to Cell Phone Service,” <http://www.cnn.com/2008/TECH/03/28/cuba.cellphones.ap/> (accessed 15 April 2008).

⁹Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook – Cuba*, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/print/cu.html> (accessed 29 March 2008).

¹⁰Carlos Alberto Montaner and Ignacio Ramonet, (quote is that of Ignacio Ramonet) “Was Fidel Good for Cuba?” *Foreign Policy* 158 (January-February 2007), 56-65, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1194870131&sid=4&Fmt=3&clientId=18762&RQT=309&VName=PQD> (accessed 14 March 2008).

¹¹Julia E. Sweig, “Fidel’s Final Victory,” *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 86, Iss. 1 (January-February 2007), 39, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1214614271> (accessed 28 February 2008).

to effectively influence the people of Cuba after the Castro family is gone. The proper use of the tools will be the challenge, mitigated by methodical interagency planning and coordination between U.S. government agencies, USSOUTHCOM, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and other interest groups, some of which are organic to Cuba. Sound interagency planning, coordination, and harmonization will be necessary to curtail the future problems many Cubans and some Americans will face during a transitional period.

CUBA TOMORROW

As with any transition, problems will occur. A key planning assumption is that the change in regimes will be relatively peaceful. However, some of the more prominent problems likely to occur include: mass migration of Cubans to other countries, especially the United States; increased drug trafficking; an even greater emergence of sanctuaries for terrorist cells; food shortages; inability to handle natural disasters such as hurricanes; and the birth of an insurgency due to unrest within the population.

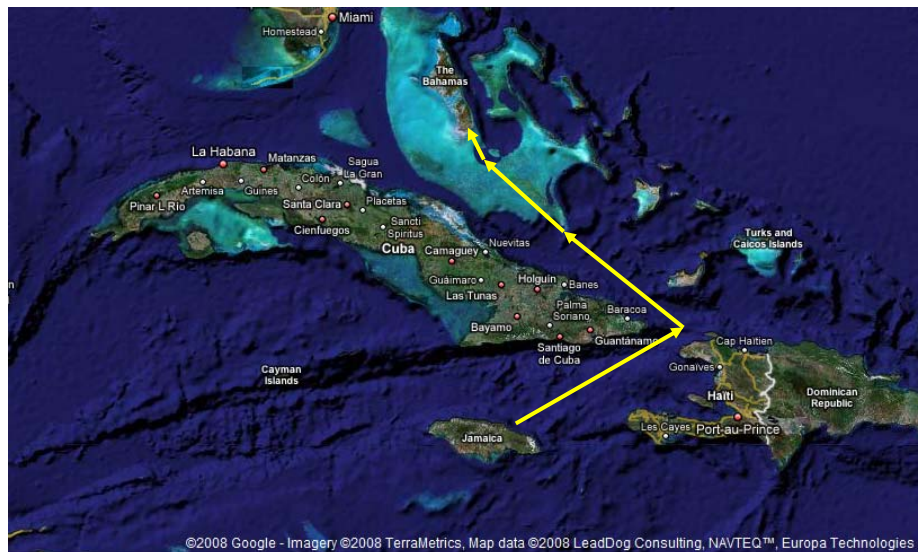
History has proven that when people become impoverished, they want to escape their situation in search for a better life. Mass migration to the United States is a possibility, as demonstrated by the migration of 40,000 Cubans to escape the food and energy crises during the summer of 1994.¹² If an influx of refugees occurs, the United States must be prepared to handle the situation as humanely as possible. Just as migration will be an issue, the somewhat chaotic atmosphere of a nation experiencing change will promote other problems as well.

¹²Julia E. Sweig, "Fidel's Final Victory," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 86, Iss. 1 (January-February 2007), 39, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1214614271> (accessed 28 February 2008).

Specific drug-related crimes are punishable by death in Cuba.¹³ However, if the law is not enforced, drug trafficking and narco-terrorism could increase. Considering Cuba's coastal borders of the Gulf of Mexico, the North Atlantic Ocean, and the Caribbean Sea, the ability to patrol all of the coastal waters and intercept drug shipments to, from, and around Cuba will be extremely difficult, especially during a transitional period when accountability for enforcement may be in question. As shown in Figure 1, one of the most prominent drug routes extends from Jamaica along the windward coast of Cuba to the Bahamas. If unpatrolled, narco-trafficking may increase.¹⁴

FIGURE 1: DRUG ROUTE – JAMAICA TO BAHAMAS VIA CUBA (WINDWARD)

Adapted from: <http://maps.google.com/maps?hl=en&tab=wl> – accessed 04 April 08



An increase in drug trafficking will not be the only serious concern. Terrorist cells within Cuba will continue to find refuge in the resulting confusion of an unstable state.

¹³ Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook – Cuba*, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/print/cu.html> (accessed 29 March 2008).

¹⁴ Interview of a U.S. official assigned to the U.S. interest section in Havana, Cuba, from June 2003-June 2005. (Unattributed interview 30 March 2008).

Terrorist organizations, such as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC), have been known to seek shelter in Cuba, a recognized supporter of terrorism since the early 1980's.¹⁵ Considering the proximity of Cuba to the United States and one of the general tenets of the National Security Strategy of the United States, "Strengthen alliances to defeat global terrorism and work to prevent attacks against us and our friends,"¹⁶ the possible rise of terrorist activity in the Caribbean cannot be ignored.

Just as terrorism is an ever present problem throughout the world, the possibility of food shortages is also a concern. Cuba currently relies on the United States to subsidize its agricultural needs. "Every year, the United States sells to Cuba roughly \$350 million in agricultural products..."¹⁷ Without the support of the United States, Cubans may suffer hunger and malnutrition. Cuba also relies on other countries, some at odds with the United States such as Venezuela, for oil supplies. As Cuba is centrally located in the Caribbean, it is also subject to harsh weather conditions during the hurricane season. Hurricanes can have devastating effects on a country, and the people of the island nation will require assistance, especially during a time of transition, if such a catastrophe occurs. Perhaps the most critical concern is one that would have the most devastating effects to the local population and to U.S. agencies attempting to help the transition: an insurgency.

If an expeditious, yet appropriate, turnover in government does not occur after Fidel and Raul Castro are no longer in power, an insurgency could arise. Some pro-regime

¹⁵ U.S. Department of State, *U.S. Cuba Policy* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, July 30, 2003). <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rls/fs/22905.htm> (accessed 22 February 2008).

¹⁶ U.S. President, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington, DC: White House, 2006). <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/2006/sectionI.html> (accessed 04 April 2008).

¹⁷ Carlos Alberto Montaner and Ignacio Ramonet, (quote is that of Carlos Alberto Montaner) "Was Fidel Good for Cuba?" *Foreign Policy* 158 (January-February 2007), 56-65, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1194870131&sid=4&Fmt=3&clientId=18762&RQT=309&VName=PQD> (accessed 14 March 2008).

members feel that if the Communist party is purged, the nation will become an incubator for an insurgency.

“Purging party members would leave the country without the skilled individuals it will need after Fidel, whatever the pace of change. And should the United States, or a government that Washington deems adequately transitional, ever be in a position to orchestrate such a purge, it would then face an insurgency of highly trained militias galvanized by anti-American nationalism.”¹⁸

As evidenced by the aforementioned examples, the future of Cuba is not bright without a post-Castro transition plan in place. Preventing potential problems may be the easiest way to win the peace. Interagency planning and coordination will be required, with USSOUTHCOM and its subordinate commands playing a crucial supporting role in a Cuba Theater of Operations construct.

U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND IN A SUPPORTING ROLE

*“The situation in Cuba and any potential repercussions from the end of Fidel Castro’s rule are another set of our priorities. We are concerned that Cuba’s poor socio-economic conditions and repressive regime, combined with a leadership change, could spark mass migration, and we are ready to assist the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to respond if mass migration occurs.”*¹⁹ -Admiral James G. Stavridis

The United States will be faced with many challenges during a transitional post-Castro Cuba. Admiral Stavridis, Commander, USSOUTHCOM, highlights one of the many challenges, migration, in his posture statement before Congress. He also stresses that USSOUTHCOM is prepared to *assist* other agencies as necessary. Additionally, USSOUTHCOM addresses the forward defense of the United States. “Through strategic and operational planning, USSOUTHCOM will ensure effective security cooperation to confront mutual threats and challenges before they mature into a crisis, and enable the execution of

¹⁸Julia E. Sweig, “Fidel’s Final Victory,” *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 86, Iss. 1 (January-February 2007), 39, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1214614271> (accessed 28 February 2008).

¹⁹U.S. Congress, Armed Services Committees, *The Posture Statement of Admiral James G. Stavridis, United States Navy Commander, United States Southern Command*, 110th Congress, March 21-22, 2007.

military operations when the need arises.”²⁰ This statement is very profound. It defines the U.S. military support for a peaceful, democratic transition in Cuba.

The first requirement of U.S. support is that the primary assistance offered to the Cuban people must have a civilian face to it. The civilian appearance will take many forms, whether it is a change in government supported by the U. S. State Department with help from other agencies such as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). The Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias (the Cuban armed forces, FAR) *expect* the United States to invade Cuba, as evidenced by the FAR’s main missions, “The FAR now concentrates on two main missions: deterring the United States from invading the island and internal security.”²¹ Invasion (in the parochial sense of the word with large forces and overwhelming firepower) of Cuba is not necessary. The United States must not force its will upon the people of Cuba and the footprint of the U.S. military on Cuban soil should be minimized. The desire for change must come from within. If this desire exists, then the Cuban people will welcome support from the United States, whether the support is financial, economic, political, humanitarian, or military. If the transition is to be successful, Cubans must first want change and second, they must want it to occur peacefully. According to Caleb McCarry, the senior Cuba Transition Coordinator working in the State Department,

“I think the fundamental basis of our support is that it’s an offer of support. We offer the support to Cubans. We do not impose it and cannot. It’s an offer of independent information, of material support for Cuba’s independent civil society...we’ve also

²⁰ United States Southern Command, *Theater Security Cooperation*, <http://www.southcom.mil/AppsSC/pages/theaterSecurity.php> (accessed 22 February 2008).

²¹ Alexander G. Crowther, *Security Requirements for Post-Transition Cuba*, (Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA. August 2007), 10.

been stepping up and will continue our efforts to advocate for the Cuban people and their right to define a democratic future for their country...”²²

Just as the first requirement of U.S. support to a transitional Cuba is the civilian face of assistance, the role of the U.S. military is an equally important necessity, especially to foster U.S. State Department efforts. U.S. forces will be crucial contributors, as a successful transition will be even more difficult to achieve without U.S. military support.

USSOUTHCOM will have the primary responsibility of leading and coordinating all military related operations supporting the democratization of Cuba. The synchronization of this effort is threefold. First, coordination will involve planning and communicating with the lead civilian agency, the U.S. State Department, to help the Cubans establish a democratic society. Second, efforts between U.S. forces and other U.S. agencies such as the Department of Homeland Security and Department of Justice as well as non-governmental organizations must be synchronized. Third, coordination must occur with the Cuban military and elements of the political leadership within the country. This coordination is not beyond the realm of possibilities. Even today, the FAR cooperate with U.S. government agencies and U.S. forces, such as the Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-South), to wage the war on drugs.²³ Also, migration issues are coordinated between the U.S. government and Cuban military forces.²⁴

Although the current situation sounds promising, the primary assumption is that the people of Cuba *want* change. This theory may not necessarily be the case, which poses a serious counterargument to the assumption. Despite an average salary of \$10 to \$20 per

²² Caleb McCarry, Cuba Transition Coordinator, *U.S. Policy on the Future of Cuba After Fidel Castro*, interview by Toby Harnden, *The Daily Telegraph*, Foreign Press Center Roundtable. Washington, DC, January 25, 2007. <http://fpc.state.gov/fpc/79551.htm> (accessed 21 March 2008).

²³ Interview of a U.S. official assigned to the U.S. interest section in Havana, Cuba, from June 2003-June 2005. (Unattributed interview 30 March 2008).

²⁴ Alexander G. Crowther, *Security Requirements for Post-Transition Cuba*, (Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA. August 2007), 10.

month, regulated and limited internet access, housing that has not been renovated since the 1950's, and rolling blackouts, Cubans, overall, are generally happy people. Utilities are paid for by the government, each person is allowed ten days worth of rations to include fruit, meat, cigars, and rum, and Cuba is home to the lowest crime rate in the hemisphere.²⁵ However, as evidenced by the 20,000 visas granted by the United States to Cubans each year, and the thousands of migrants intercepted annually, people are in search of a better life.²⁶ Change is on the horizon, but, "Cuba will change when Cuban people want it to change."²⁷ The United States and USSOUTHCOM must be ready for this change, and though some steps have been taken to prepare for a post-Castro transitional Cuba, other actions must be taken to make the change as smooth as possible for all involved. An adaptable command and control construct incorporating a Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) in a geographically defined Cuba Theater of Operations (CTO) is the key means to a smooth transition in Cuba.

CUBA THEATER OF OPEARTIONS (CTO) CONSTRUCT

The Military Piece

The first task USSOUTHCOM must accomplish is to establish a command and control construct for U.S. and coalition forces. An assumption is that coalition forces will participate due to the amount of economic interest some nations have already established within Cuba. This construct must include a liaison cell, such as a proposed Combined Joint Interagency Coordination Group (CJIACG) to coordinate with non-military departments, agencies, and coalition forces. The overarching premise of the construct is the supporting role USSOUTHCOM would play to civilian government agencies, primarily the U.S. State

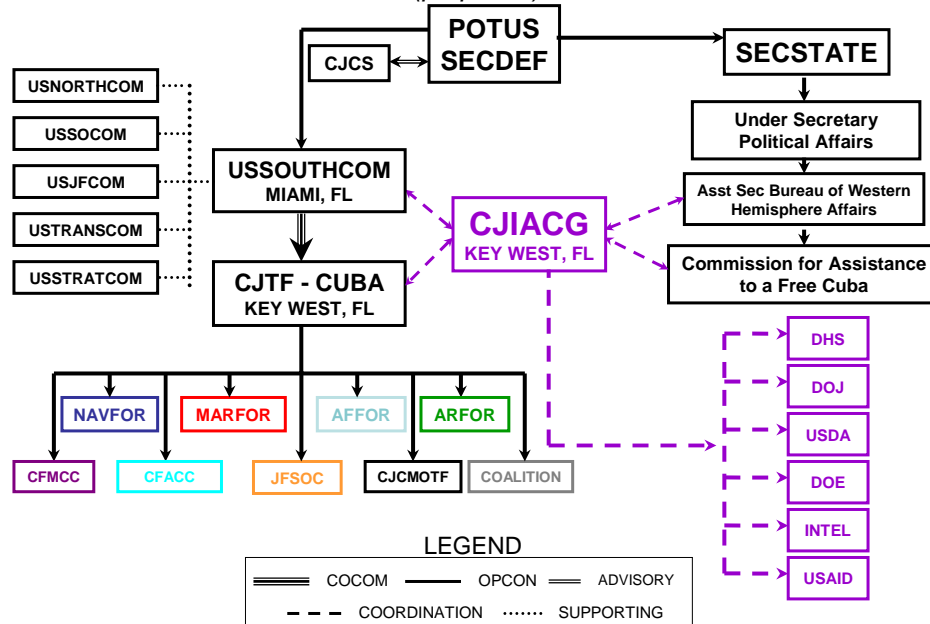
²⁵ Interview of a U.S. official assigned to the U.S. interest section in Havana, Cuba, from June 2003-June 2005. (Unattributed interview 30 March 2008).

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

Department. In an effort to alleviate the question as to who is in charge and how assets will be properly allocated, a proposed command construct is shown in Figure 2 and expanded in Appendix A:

Figure 2: Cuba Theater of Operations (CTO) Construct
(proposed)



Starting from the top, the construct begins with the President of the United States and the Secretary of Defense. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) would be the primary military advisor to the President and the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF). As expected, USSOUTHCOM would be directly subordinate to the President and the SECDEF. Although USSOUTHCOM would be playing a supporting role to civilian agencies, USSOUTHCOM, in turn, would be supported by major commands including: United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM), United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), United States Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM), United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), and United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM). These commands are vital to the support of operations in the CTO.

USNORTHCOM will support USSOUTHCOM by taking responsibility for homeland security and defense, especially in the event of an influx of migrants onto U.S. soil.

USSOCOM will provide forces to handle special operations as required by the Joint Forces Special Operations Component (JFSOC). USJFCOM has the ability to support USSOUTHCOM by providing forces and staff to help synthesize joint operations efforts between the services as well as with government agencies and coalition forces. USJFCOM liaisons will be a necessity as “The command works closely with combatant commanders, the services, and other government agencies to identify and resolve joint war-fighting deficiencies.”²⁸ USTRANSCOM’s strength is to provide the airlift requirements necessary to support logistics in the USSOUTHCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR) and the CTO. USSTRATCOM will be vital, especially in support of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) requirements as well as information operations (IO). Just as major commands will be supporting USSOUTHCOM, a subordinate command must be established to lead operations specific to the CTO.

A Combined Joint Task Force Cuba (CJTF-Cuba) would be a beneficial subordinate command to USSOUTHCOM for the command and control of Cuban theater specific operations. Key West, Florida (with a designated alternate location in the event of a hurricane) would be an ideal base for the task force not only due to its proximity to Cuba, but also due to the established Navy and Coast Guard infrastructure on the island as well as a large Naval Air Station on neighboring Boca Chica Key. The CJTF-Cuba commander (ideally a U.S. Navy officer) would have direct operational control of nine proposed service and functional component commands. Each branch of the armed forces would fall under

²⁸ United States Joint Forces Command, *United States Joint Forces Command About Us*, <http://www.jfcom.mil/about/about1.htm> (accessed 01 April 08).

their respective service component commands subordinate to the CJTF-Cuba commander. Since Cuba is an island nation, naval forces (NAVFOR) will be used in a variety of roles as ordered by the Combined Forces Maritime Component Commander (CFMCC). Due to the premium location of the U.S. Marine Corps base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Marine forces (MARFOR) will already be established on the island. Guantanamo Bay will be crucial as it can be used to aid Cuban migrants and refugees. In fact, "...the U.S. military is preparing a site on its Guantanamo base in Cuba for a tent camp to house up to 10,000 Caribbean migrants by next summer...there are tentative plans for a second tent camp that could hold 35,000 more."²⁹ Additionally, if a worst-case scenario such as a non-combatant evacuation operations (NEO) situation arises, the Marines will be pre-positioned to handle such a mission.

U.S. Air Force (AFFOR) resources will be required to support intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance missions (ISR) as well as information operations (IO) and strategic communications. Army forces (ARFOR) is the final service component to fall under operational control of the CJTF-Cuba commander. Civil affairs personnel with expertise in areas such as water purification, engineering, medical support, and natural disaster relief, such as a hurricane, will be beneficial for the USSOUTHCOM and CJTF-Cuba commanders to have readily available. In addition to the service component commands, functional and coalition commands are also a part of the CTO construct.

Since Cuba is surrounded by water, heavy emphasis will be placed on a functional maritime component. A Combined Forces Maritime Component Command (CFMCC) would be most appropriate to handle all maritime forces including coalition, U.S. Navy and

²⁹Jane Sutton, "U.S. Readying Guantanamo Base for Migrant Influx," Reuters, 24 October 2007, <http://www.reuters.com/article/politicsNews/idUSN2414080320071024> (accessed 29 March 2008).

U.S. Coast Guard assets. The contributions of these forces will be crucial in the prevention and deterrence of mass migration; protection of U.S. territorial waters and shores; and maritime and drug interdiction. Although many of the operations will more than likely be maritime-centric, the roles of other functional commands are no less important.

All missions involving aircraft from any service or coalition nation, manned or unmanned, will fall under the auspices of the Combined Forces Air Component Commander (CFACC). These sorties must be coordinated and de-conflicted via a Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC), which already exists as part of the Twelfth Air Force, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, to support USSOUTHCOM.³⁰ The CAOC, complete with the “Falconer” weapons system,³¹ would facilitate air operations throughout the CTO. Liaison officers located at CJTF-Cuba and at the CAOC will keep the lines of communication open between the two entities since they will not be co-located. A Combined Forces Land Component Commander (CFLCC) will not be established since the actual number of ground forces will be kept to a minimum. However, if ground troop levels increase, the CJTF-Cuba commander may designate the MARFOR commander as the CFLCC, if necessary.

A Joint Forces Special Operations Component (JFSOC) will be required to execute specialized missions. Coalition forces will be subordinate to the CJTF-Cuba commander and integrated as appropriate. Finally, a Combined Joint Civil Military Operations Task Force (CJCMOTF) will be a beneficial option for the CJTF-Cuba commander. The CJCMOTF will coordinate civil-military efforts and relations between Cubans, the Cuban military and government, U.S. and coalition military forces, U.S. government agencies, Intergovernmental

³⁰ Air Force Print News Today, “Air Force Unveils First-Ever CONUS ‘Warfighting’ CAOC,” http://www.12af.acc.af.mil/news/story_print.asp?id=123052340 (accessed 18 April 2008).

³¹ Ibid.

Organizations (IGOs) such as the Organization of American States (OAS), and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), on the ground in Cuba. Despite a prepared command and control construct, the CJTF-Cuba commander must be afforded the ability to modify his subordinate structure as emerging requirements dictate.

Just as the service and functional components play a necessary supporting role to the CJTF-Cuba and USSOUTHCOM commanders, these commanders will ultimately be providing support to U.S. government efforts and organizations, the other major piece of the CTO construct.

The Civilian Piece

On the civilian side of U.S. government efforts in a post-Castro Cuba, the chain of command begins at the top with the President of the United States. Subordinate to him is the Secretary of State (SECSTATE), followed by the Under Secretary for Political Affairs; the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs; and the Cuba Transition Coordinator at the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba.³² Government agencies will play crucial roles during a post-Castro Cuba transition. These agencies include components of various departments such as: Department of Homeland Security (U.S. Customs and U.S. Border Patrol); Department of Justice (Federal Bureau of Investigation and Drug Enforcement Agency); Department of Agriculture (USDA); and the Department of Energy. Contributions will be made by U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) as well as the intelligence community including the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the National Security Agency (NSA). Perhaps the most profound challenge to an ideal CTO

³² U.S. Department of State, *Department of State Organization Chart*, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/rls/dos/7926.htm> (accessed 21 April 2008).

construct is creating *unity of effort* between all forces and agencies involved in the mission. This challenge can be mitigated through a Combined Joint Interagency Coordination Group (CJIACG).

COMBINED JOINT INTERAGENCY COORDINATION GROUP (CJIACG)

The CJIACG is the centerpiece to the CTO construct. The heart of this cell is where the majority of military, coalition, and governmental agency planning and coordination will occur. USSOUTHCOM and CJTF-Cuba commands, each coalition force, the State Department including the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba, and the Cuba country team and experts will have senior liaisons to the CJIACG, ideally co-located with CJTF-Cuba in Key West, Florida. Additionally, government agencies such as the Department of Homeland Security will have representatives within the cell. The CJIACG will provide a forum for face-to-face cooperation between each of the components to ensure the proper focus of effort in achieving the objective of a peaceful transition to a free, democratic Cuba. As ideal as this construct may be, some challenges exist.

First, the manning requirement for the CJTF-Cuba, CJIACG, and the functional commands may strain the manning of other commands outside of USSOUTHCOM, especially considering the continued requirements for Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and Operation ENDURING FREEDOM in Iraq and Afghanistan respectively. Second, for the construct to work correctly, communication is a necessity. If a breakdown in communication occurs between any of the components, a “domino effect” is possible, which can have catastrophic results, depending on the situation. Finally, the assumption is made that material

assets will be available. Without resources, such as people and equipment, the mission will fail.

Regardless of the amount of planning, coordination, and ultimate success of a peaceful transition to a democratic Cuba, the establishment of a robust Theater Security Cooperation Plan (TSCP) for Cuba is paramount in order to cement all prior efforts.

THEATER SECURITY COOPERATION PLAN

Once a less authoritarian Cuba has been established, ongoing efforts will be required to promote the security of the nation and Caribbean. The security of the region can be enhanced via a robust Theater Security Cooperation Plan between the United States, Cuba, and other Caribbean nations. The TSCP should include International Military Education and Training (IMET) such as sending Cuban military officers to U.S. service schools (such as the Naval War College). U.S. forces can help train Cuban forces, promoting Foreign Internal Defense (FID), which will help prepare Cuba to defend against terrorist activity. Finally, combined exercises, especially between the U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard, and Cuban naval forces would foster better understanding between the nations as well as promote preparedness to counter illegal drug operations throughout the Caribbean. Even today, the Cuban military desires to conduct combined exercises with U.S. forces.³³ Regardless of when the Cuban transition to democracy will occur, a TSCP must be established to ease the eventual conversion from a supported Cuba to a self-sustaining, democratized Cuba.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on a critical analysis of a possible renaissance in Cuban society, Cuba's future is full of potential. This promising prospect will only be overshadowed by the array of

³³ Interview of a U.S. official assigned to the U.S. interest section in Havana, Cuba, from June 2003-June 2005. (Unattributed interview 30 March 2008).

problems that may arise during a transitional period that will take place throughout the country. Some of these problems include: mass migration, an increase in narco-trafficking, food shortages, a growth in terrorist cells, and the possibility of an insurgency. However, if democracy is sought by the Cuban people and is introduced at the appropriate time, the transition will be a success. A post-Castro Cuba has the potential to become one of the most influential, peaceful, prosperous nations in the Caribbean paradise. This ultimate end-state will require the assistance of Cuba's neighbor to the north: the United States of America.

RECOMMENDATIONS

An efficient way for the United States to help the people of Cuba is to implement the Cuba Theater of Operations construct. The premise of the construct is that USSOUTHCOM and its subordinate forces will play a supporting role to a primarily civilian effort of fostering democracy in Cuba. The CTO construct will require robust communication, cooperation, and unity of effort between all service forces, functional components, coalition contributions, and government agencies for the theory to work. The heart of the CTO idea is the Combined Joint Interagency Coordination Group (CJIACG). Within this cell is where the lifeblood of coordination and cooperation will flow. Sound preparation and execution of operations via an established CTO construct and a well-planned Theater Security Cooperation Plan will be the required tools for a peaceful transition to democracy in a post-Castro Cuba. Reliability, trustworthiness, commitment, and dependability are words that describe "fidelity." A "New Fidelity" of democratic ideals is on the horizon for the people of Cuba, and USSOUTHCOM in a supporting role as part of a Cuba Theater of Operations construct is the avenue to freedom.

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